



DIVINE LIFE SERIES No. 4

WAY TO PEACE AND BLISS

BY

SRI SWAMI SIVANANDA SARASWATI
"ANANDA KUTIR"—RIKHIKESH
(HIMALAYAS)

FOR FREE DISTRIBUTION

PUBLISHED BY
THE DIVINE LIFE TRUST SOCIETY
RIKHIKESH

JULY 1936

Printed by **Far Narain, B.A., LL.B.**, at the
D. Singh Press, Dayalbagh, Agra.

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DIVINE LIFE TRUST SOCIETY

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WAY TO PEACE & BLISS

1. THE WORLD IS UNREAL

Hari Om

This world is *asat* or unreal. It is mere appearance. That which exists in the past, present and future, that which has no beginning, middle and end and that which is unchanging is *Sat*. *Sat* is Brahman or Atman. That which is real is Self-existent (*svayambhu*), *Svatantra* (independent), *Svayam jyoti* (Self-luminous) and self-knowledge. What you see with your physical eyes is ever-changing. It is *anitya* and *avinasi*. It is *asara*, *kshanabhanghur* and *apadramania*.

This world is a shadow or reflection of Brahman or God. The reflection of your face in the mirror or water is unreal. Even so this world which is a mere reflection of Brahman is also unreal. Through the force of *Avidya* or *Maya* it appears as real. If *Vairagya* and discrimination dawn in a man the whole angle of vision becomes changed. There are various kinds of dirt in the mirror-mind and so the reflection of *Paramatma* is not clearly seen in the mind. As soon as one gets *chitta-shuddhi* or purity of mind by removal of lust, anger, egoism, selfishness, pride etc., he becomes a changed being. He experiences sublime, divine feelings. When there is attraction and attachment in the mind for sensual objects, the mind is bound to this world.

Earth is the only solid reality. Pots, jars and other forms that are made out of mud are mere appearances. They are in name only. The solid reality at the back of these names and forms is mere mud only. When these forms are broken, they become mud again. Even so these names and forms are unreal. The solid reality is Brahman or God who is the basis or substratum for this world. The waves, ripples, foam etc., belong to the ocean. They are mere water only. They have come out of the ocean. They exist in ocean and dissolve in the ocean. Ocean always exists. Even so all these names and forms have come out of Brahman. They exist in Brahman. They dissolve in Brahman.

Just as a snake is super-imposed on the rope, silver on the mother-of-pearl, water in the mirage, man in the post, so also this world and body are super-imposed on the pure Atman. When you know that the adhistan of snake is only rope, when you get knowledge of the rope, the bhranti or illusion of snake and fear vanish. Even so when you get knowledge of Brahman this body-idea and reality of the world will totally vanish. It is avidya that has created these troubles. It is only a wrong notion in the mind that the body is the Self, is the root cause of all human sufferings.

When you attend a cinema you actually think that the pictures are all real. They move and talk. They sing. But you are fully aware that these pictures are false and the real persons are different from those unreal persons who appear on the screen. This world is exactly a cinema show. The names and

forms that you see are false and the operator behind this show, the real antaryami and Director of this universe alone is real.

Whatever you see is Maya-jalam or jugglery of Maya. This jugglery is set up by Maya through the Indriyas and mind. Just as the juggler is not affected by the tricks, so also a knower of Brahman is not in the least affected by the play of Maya.

The waking state is only a long dream. There is not much difference between the waking state and the dreaming state. The only difference is that the waking state is a long dream. Fire burns in the dream. A knife cuts in the dream. You are frightened when the tiger attacks. You shriek and wake up immediately. Just as the dream appears false when you wake up, so also this world appears as a dream for a Gyani who has knowledge of Brahman. He may work. He may eat. He may talk. But his mind is ever resting on his own Swaroop. The idea that this world is a dream is firmly rooted in his mind. He actually feels and experiences.

When you are in a train all the trees and the paddy fields appear to be moving. The train seems to be stationary. When you are in the train in a Junction, the train in which you are seated seems to move when the adjacent train moves. The moving train appears to be stationary. Even so Atman is ever silent and stationary. He is akarta and abhokta, non-doer and non-enjoyer. He is niravayava (without any limbs) and so He is nishkriya. But the actions and enjoyments are super-imposed on the Atman on account of Avidya. Just as the motion of the clouds

is attributed to the Sun or Moon, so also the motion of the body and the Indriyas is attributed to the immovable (achal) Atman. The boat actually moves, but the trees on the shore appear to move. Even so the movement of the body and the Indriyas are attributed to the steady Brahman.

When the hypnotist hypnotises the whole audience, all people believe that the fakir is ascending along the rope in the air. All people see that the hypnotist devours a big sword and cuts the body of the lady in the small box. Even so you are all hypnotised by Maya and Avidya and you take this unreal world as a solid reality. De-hypnotise yourself by getting knowledge of Atman. Then you will understand the jugglery of Maya.

The man with jaundiced eyes sees everything as yellow. A tiger sees in the darkness. This world is a play of lens only. If you see through a telescope it appears different. If you have divya drishti through samadhi you will see Atma only everywhere and you will have the experience of "Sarvam kalvidham Brahm" of the Upanishads. Arjuna and Sanjaya had the eyes of wisdom. They had different experiences.

There is no world in deep sleep. From this we can draw a conclusion that wherever there is mind there is world. If there is no mind there is no world. This mind also is perishable. If the attractions and attachments of the mind are destroyed, there comes manonas or death of the mind. Mind is jada, vinashi. It is karyā (effect) of sattwa guna. If you can consciously destroy the mind through purification and concentration, this world vanishes. Everything

becomes Brahman. You will see, Atma only everywhere.

Electricity is one. It passes along the insulated wires through different coloured bulbs and you see various coloured lights. Even so Paramatman is one. The energy is one in all these bulbs of bodies of human beings. One Paramatman is pervading these beings. Owing to different temperaments and different kinds of antahkarana with various kinds of vasanas, tastes and samskaras, there appear apparent differences. The differences are unreal. They are mental creation. When knowledge of the basis or adhistan comes, all these illusory differences that are set up by this Maya and mind will totally vanish.

You will clearly understand from the various illustrations and sound arguments and proofs given above that this world is unreal and the solid reality is Atman or Brahman who pervades and permeates all these names and forms. He is the source or womb for all these names and forms. Renounce all the names and forms and realise the Sat-chit-ananda Atman who is the substratum for this world and body through purification, sadhachara, vichara and constant meditation. Then and then alone you will have eternal bliss, immortality and infinite knowledge. May that Brahman guide you all!

2. ATTACHMENT

The subject of attachment is of universal importance. No one is free from attachment. The Sanskrit word for attachment is *Asakti*. The term RAGA also is used sometimes. Desire is made

up of three parts viz. Aasakti, Kamana or longing and preference. A man is attached to rice. He has a longing for eating rice when he has given up rice for two months on account of his diabetes. This longing or internal craving is called Kamana. If Aasakti dies, then Kamana will vanish by itself. But preference for rice will remain. If rice and bread are served, a Madras or a Bengali will have certainly preference for rice. The preference also must die if you want to kill desire completely.

Attachment is the most powerful weapon of Maya for binding the Jivas to the samsaric wheel of birth and death. You would have never come into this world, had it not been for attachment. The first attachment starts with this physical body. Then all other attachments crop up. Then comes the relationship of father, mother, brother, sister, wife, son, friend, etc. One may be attached to a place, person or an object. Wherever there is attachment, there is the idea of *MINENESS* or *MAMTA*. Attachment is a kind of very strong glue that binds the mind with the objects. Why does the mind get attached to objects or persons? Because it finds pleasure in objects or persons. Wherever there is pleasure, the mind gets attached there. It is attached to wife, son, house, property, horse or a friend, because the mind finds pleasure in these objects.

Attachment is the root cause for human sufferings. It is the product or effect of ignorance or Avidya. It is a modification of nescience or ignorance. The husband weeps on the death of his wife because he is attached to the physical body of his wife. The wife weeps on the death of her husband, not because of

pure love for him, but because she could not get now any sexual pleasure and other comforts which she had when he was alive. Wherever there is attachment there are moha and fear. Moha or infatuated love or delusion and fear are the old-standing associates of attachment. The cause of fear is attachment for this body and property. Attachment and fear are inseparable. They are like fire and heat.

Attachment takes various forms. One should be on the alert always to detect its subtle working. One cannot spare even Sannyasins who have renounced everything. Sannyasins get slowly attached to their ashrams and disciples. This attachment is stronger than the attachment of worldly persons. This is more difficult for eradication. Thousands of widows from Bengal and Madras are now staying in Benares with the idea that they will get Mukti if they die in Benares. But their minds are fixed on their grandsons and grand-daughters. They are attached to their huge heaps of cow-dung cakes which they have accumulated in their back-yards of their houses for starting fire.

The mind tries its level best to get attached to some form or other. It cannot remain without clinging to one form. It leaves one form and immediately clings to another. This is its swabhava. This is due to the quality—Rajas. If Rajas is eradicated, all attachments will die by themselves. People are attached to paltry things, even to note-books, books, walking sticks, pictures, small-handkerchiefs etc. The friendship of several years comes to a termination if Mr. R. friend of Mr. S. loses a small book which he

borrowed from Mr. S. then fight ensues. There is an exchange of hot words and abuses; they do not talk and see each other from that moment. Ladies fight for little things. All come out of attachment for little, meagre things. Even sannyasins get attached to their kamandals and sticks and small tumblers. Even at the point of death, they entertain thoughts of petty articles. The mind is so framed that it sticks to the old ruts and grooves. It demands drastic and rigorous discipline and sadhana to get rid of all sorts of attachment. One has to struggle hard and do vichara. The mind needs constant training. If one says "That house is on fire, the horse is dead" you are not affected. Because there is neither attachment nor identification here. But if he says "The house of Mr. Ram Narayan is on fire, the horse of Mr. Ganga Shankar is dead," at once the hearts of these people are affected, because they have got identification or attachment with the house and horse. It is verily attachment that brings sorrow.

It is attachment that brings us again and again in this mrityu-loka. The seeds of attachment are ingrained in the sub-conscious mind. We have to obliterate or fry up all these seeds through right thinking, vichara and Atma-Gyana. We have to cut all these illusory attachments through the sword of non-attachment or Vairagya. The Gita says: "Asanga sastrena dhirhedhana chitwa. Cut this tree of Maya with the sword of non-attachment." Chap. 15.

Paramahansa Sannyasins always wander about. They cannot stay for more than 3 days in a place. The main object in this discipline is to cut off attach-

ment. By long stay in one place Rag-Dwesh develop. Real renunciation consists in renouncing the idea that "I am the body". Real renunciation consists in abandoning the attachment for this body. "Sarva sangha parityaga--giving up all sorts of attachment" is the key for attaining the bliss of Atma. It does not mean that one should retire into the forest. Sikhidwaja still had attachment to his body and kamandal though he lived in forest, whereas his wife Queen Chudalai was absolutely free from any sort of attachment even though she ruled a dominion.

You will have to train your mind daily in all dealings and actions. Do not get attached to your wife, children and property. The world is like a public inn. People are united for sometime and they separate after a short time. Turn the mind towards God or Atma, and do daily japa, meditation. Study books on Vedanta and Barthari Vairagya shatakam which deals with vairagya. Develop internal vairagya by understanding the illusory nature of this world. Remember the pains of this samsara, viz., birth, death, old age, diseases and miseries of this world. Place before the mind the glorious life in Atman and the immense bliss of a spiritual life. Remember the Saints, Yogins and Gyanins like Sri Sankara, Mansoor, Shams Tabriez, Gyana Dev and their teachings. Slowly the mind will be weaned from sensual objects. It can be gradually turned towards God and higher things. Have recourse to sat-sang.

Attachment is real death. Non-attachment is eternal life. Attachment brings manifold miseries. Non-attachment brings manifold bliss. Attachment contracts the heart. Non-attachment expands the

heart *ad infinitum*. Attachment makes man a little being. Non-attachment raises man to God-head. Attachment brings bondage. Non-attachment brings freedom, independence and perfection. Attachment brings discord and rupture. Non-attachment brings concord and harmony. Attachment is poison. Non-attachment is nectar. Attachment is your dreadful enemy. Non-attachment is your intimate friend. Attachment hurls you down in this miserable samsara. Non-attachment lifts you up to the lofty heights of Brahman-hood.

In Southern India a Nattukottai Chetty's wife lost her small son. The son accidentally rolled into a tank. The mother had very intense attachment to this only son. At once she also jumped into the tank and drowned herself. The husband also was very much attached to the wife and child. He also drowned himself immediately. Instances like this occur daily. Several people become very nervous and get shock also when their wife or son dies. They are not able to talk or walk. Such is the havoc done by attachment.

Learn to discriminate between the real and unreal. Develop vairagya. Have no intimate connection with any body. Lead a life of non-attachment in this world like water in the lotus leaf. Do not bother a bit when you lose little things. Think always that the perishable objects of the world are worthless. Repeat the formulae mentally several times daily:—

All objects are Vishtavat, or Vishavat, like dung or poison, like straw or dust.

Do Atma-Vichara. Meditate daily. That man who has no attachment in this world is the most happy

man. He is God himself. His joy is indescribable. He must be adored.

3. ADAPTABILITY

Adaptability is a virtue or noble quality by which one adapts or fits himself with others, whatever their nature may be. The man of adaptability accommodates himself with others, whatever their temperament may be. This is a most desirable quality for success in life. This has to be developed slowly. The vast majority of persons do not know how to adjust themselves with others. Adaptability is a peculiar knack or pluck to win the hearts of others by a little bending.

The wife does not know how to adapt herself with her husband. She displeases her husband always and makes quarrels in the house and gets a divorce. The clerk does not know how to adapt himself with his boss or superior. He quarrels with the superior and gets an immediate sack. The disciple does not know how to adapt himself with his Guru. He misbehaves, and leaves the Guru. The businessman does not know how to adapt himself with the customers and loses his customers and business. The Dewan does not know how to adapt himself with the Maharajah. He has to leave the State Service. The world runs on adaptability. He who knows this art or science of adaptability pulls on quite well in this world and is always happy under any conditions of life.

The man must be pliable if he wants to adapt himself. It does need much wisdom or ingenuity for developing adaptability. If the clerk understands

well the ways and habits and temperament of his superior and adjusts himself nicely to suit his ways, his superior becomes a slave of the clerk. You will have to use some kind words and castor oil. A little lubricant to soften his heart is needed. That is all. Speak gently and sweetly. Carry out his orders to the very letter. Never retort him. "Obedience is greater than sacrifice." Remember this maxim at all times. The superior wants a little respect. Say "Hajhi-Hajhi, Ji-huzur, very well Sir." It costs you nothing. Then your superior becomes your slave. He has for you a soft corner in his heart. You become his pet. He will do whatever you want. He will excuse your mistakes. Humility and obedience are necessary for developing adaptability. That egoistic, proud man finds it very difficult to adapt himself. He is always in trouble. He always fails in his attempts. Egoism and pride are two important obstacles in the way of developing adaptability.

When one student does not know how to adapt himself with his fellow who is living in the same room, friction comes in and their friendship is broken immediately. Adaptability makes friendship last for a long-time. Students fight for little things. One student says "I gave Mr. X tea for several days. I took him to cinema on my own account for several days. I asked him to lend me the book "Boswell's Life of Johnson" for reading. He has bluntly refused now. What sort of friend he is ! I do not like him." The friendship is broken now. A simple thing upsets the mind. Adaptability is a strong cat-gut ligature that links people in un-broken love and friendship. A man of adaptability

can pull on with anybody in any part of the world. People unconsciously love a man of adaptability. Adaptability gives immense strength and profound joy. Adaptability develops will.

A man of adaptability has to make some sacrifice. Adaptability develops the spirit of sacrifice. It kills selfishness. A man of adaptability has to share what he has with others. He has to bear insult and hard words. A man of adaptability develops the feeling of unity or oneness of life. For Vedantic sadhana it is of great help. He who practises adaptability has to destroy the feelings of ghrina and contempt and the idea of superiority. He has to mix with all. He has to embrace all. Adaptability develops universal love and kills the feeling of hatred.

A man of adaptability has to put up with the unkind words and harsh treatment of his friends. He has to develop patience and endurance. These virtues develop by themselves unconsciously when he tries to adapt himself with others. A man of adaptability can live in any environment. He can live in a hut. He can live in a cool place. He can bear the heat of Benares or Africa. He develops balance of mind. He can bear extreme heat and cold. Adaptability brings eventually Atma-Gyana. He who has this noble virtue is a great man in this world. He is always happy and successful.

4. UNIVERSAL LOVE

There is no virtue higher than love, there is no treasure higher than love, there is no knowledge higher than love, there is no Dharma higher than

love, there is no religion higher than love, because love is Truth, love is God. This world has come out of love, this world exists in love and this world ultimately dissolves in love. God is an embodiment of love. In every inch of His creation you can verily understand His love.

To love man is to love God alone. Man is the true image of God. He is His Amsa. In Gita you will find "A portion of mine own self, transformed in the world of life into an immortal spirit, draweth round itself the senses of which the mind is the sixth, veiled in matter" Chap. XV-7. "Knowledge of sacrifice (Adhi Yagna) tells of Me, as wearing the body, O best of living beings !" Chap. VIII-4. Love is the fulfilling of the law. The aim of charity, social service, altruism, humanitarianism, socialism, bolshevism, is to develop this universal love, and expand one's heart *ad infinitum*. Theosophy speaks of universal brotherhood and tries to unite all through the common thread of cosmic love. Love is a great leveller. There is no power on earth greater than love. You can conquer the world if you have even a ray of this Divine love, which is absolutely free from even a tinge of selfishness. Pure love is a rare gift from God. It is the fruit of one's untiring service to humanity and incalculable virtuous actions in several incarnations. It is a rare commodity indeed.

He who possesses this ray is a veritable God on earth. He is a mighty potentate. True religion does not consist in ritualistic observances, baths and pilgrimages but in loving all. Cosmic love is all-embracing and all-inclusive. In pure love

no one is shut out from its warm embrace. It is wide enough to include the humblest of us, from the tiny ant to the mighty elephant, from the condemned beggar to the mighty Emperor, from the worst scoundrel to the reputed saint on the surface of this earth. It is hatred that separates man from man. It is pride and egoism that divide a man from another. Hatred, pride, egoism are all mental creations. They are the products of ignorance. They cannot stand before pure love.

It is easy to talk of universal love. When you come to the practical field, you obviously show signs of failure. If anybody talks ill of you and uses harsh words, at once you are thrown out of balance. You get irritated and show angry face, and pay him in the same coin. "Where is universal love now? You do not like to part with your possessions when you see people who are in distress. A man who is struggling to develop cosmic love and to realise Him through love cannot keep anything more than he actually needs for keeping his life going. He will sacrifice even this little to serve a needy one and undergo starvation willingly and with much pleasure. He will rejoice that God has given him a rare opportunity to serve Him. People talk of universal love and are very niggardly in action. They show lip-sympathy and lip-love. This is hypocrisy. Those who talk of universal love should try to possess various sattwic virtues such as kshma, patience, perseverance, tolerance, generosity, straightforwardness, mercy, truthfulness, ahimsa, Brahmacharya, Nirabhimananta etc. He should serve humanity untiringly days and nights

with disinterested, self-less spirit for many years. He must kill his little self ruthlessly. He must bear calmly insults and injuries. Then only there is the prospect of cultivating cosmic love. Otherwise it is vain, flowery talk and idle gossiping only. It is sugar in paper or tiger in the carpet. Pure divine love consciously felt and spontaneously directed towards all beings including animals, birds, etc., is, indeed, the result of one's vision or realisation of the Supreme Being.

That person who has developed universal love is nearer and dearer to God. He will never hate, abuse or show contempt towards anybody. That sort of love alone is the end and aim or goal of life. Lord Buddha was an ocean of love. Your highest duty is to develop universal love to a maximum degree. If you want to attain perfection, if you wish to enjoy infinite peace and bliss, if you want to become immortal and develop pure divine love, cultivate universal love by serving and loving all, for love alone will take you to the goal, love alone can purify your heart, love alone will bring you liberation, and love alone can carry you to the other shore of bliss and immortality, the shore which is beyond grief, pain, fear, and darkness. Purify your thought, speech and action in the fire of love. Bathe and plunge deep in the sacred waters of love. Taste the honey of love. Become an embodiment of love.

Hari Om Tat Sat.

Om Santi Santi Santi.

THE DIVINE LIFE TRUST SOCIETY

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1. To disseminate spiritual knowledge :—

- (a) by the publication and *free distribution of books*, pamphlets and magazines dealing with ancient Hindu philosophy, religion and medicine.
- (b) by propagating Hari Nam by holding and arranging Hari Sankirtans.
- (c) by establishing training centres or societies for the physical regeneration of youths through Hatha Yoga, Brahmacharya, Ashtanga Yoga, etc.

and to do all such acts and things as may be necessary or conducive to the spiritual good of the world in general and to the attainment of the above objects in particular.

2. To help deserving students by granting them scholarships for the prosecution of religious and spiritual training.
3. To establish a dispensary or any other like institution for providing free medical aid and free medicines for the poor specially and the public generally.

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